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# SWAMP/BOTTOMLAND FOREST

## Overview

Thick, wet, sticky, humid, muddy, creepy, and buggy are all words used to describe swamps and bottomlands. They sound miserable -- a common misconception. In reality, swamps are an ecosystem that houses many animals and plants all working hard at making a living. Swamps serve as a cleansing reservoir and filtration system for the adjacent uplands of the Francis Marion National Forest. There are numerous animals that call this watery world home, and not all of them swim or slither. Many run, fly, crawl, and climb.

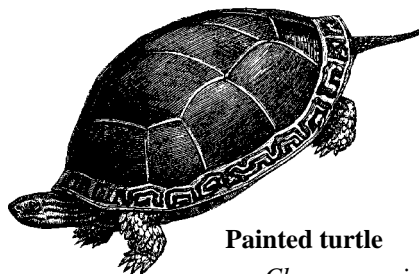
## Species Checklist

### Animals

American alligator  
barred owl  
crayfish  
eastern cottonmouth  
eastern wild turkey  
great egret  
green anole  
night heron  
pileated woodpecker  
prothonotary warbler  
red-shouldered hawk  
river otter  
swallow-tailed kite  
wood duck  
yellow-bellied slider

### Plants

baldcypress  
blue-flag iris  
duckweed  
palmetto fronds  
pickerelweed  
spider lilly  
swamp rose  
water-tupelo



Painted turtle

*Chrysemys picta*

## Important Messages



Swamps are like huge filtering pumps. Water passes through soil, is held in reserve, and then flows into streams.



In the Francis Marion Forest, over 14,000 acres of bottomland hardwood/swamp have been designated as Wilderness Areas and are preserved in their natural state.



The thick vegetation of swamps provide shelter for numerous birds, and is particularly important for migrating songbirds. Swallow-tailed kites, prothonotary warblers and barred owls are all common feathered inhabitants.



Historically, many swamps were cleared to grow rice. The water levels of the rice fields were controlled using a system of dikes and canals, whose remnants are still visible today.



Ivory-billed woodpecker

*Campephilus principalis*

Considered extinct in the United States -- closely resembles the common pileated woodpecker

## Vocabulary

bottomland	reservoir
canal	upland
dike	wilderness area
ecosystem	
filter	
migratory	

## Swamp/Bottomland Habitat in the Forest (in black)

